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ABSTRACT

The purpose of the study was to investigate the impact self-esteem had on reading with children of diverse reading levels using a modified reading program. Three students were targeted in the study. For the purpose of identification for this research, targeted students were assigned pseudonyms. The identities were completely anonymous to everyone else. Targeted students were part of a class in which reading levels ranged from a 2.0-3.0-grade equivalency. The three students were chosen because of their regular attendance record and differentiated reading levels. Students read different self-esteem novels on their actual reading levels in a modified version of Literature Circles. Two girls and one boy were chosen for study; Susan identified as superior, Maria identified as the midpoint of the population, and Juan identified as less able in reading. A profile of the academic performance of the three students is provided in table 4. In order to analyze the collected data, research was broken down into three types of data; interpretation of the results from pre-test and post-test, the information obtained from the actual samples of work by the students, and the information obtained from the observations made at the time of the study. Each targeted student was observed individually to see how the intervention impacted each one. Improvements, setbacks, and other factors that arose during the study were observed. Results indicated the modified reading intervention enhanced self-esteem and reading in the three students of diverse reading levels. Conclusions were drawn from these evaluations and results determined. Research lasted approximately six weeks. For continuity sake, targeted students were discussed one at a time from start to finish. Contains 92 references and 7 tables of data. Appendixes contain a reading attitudes survey instrument, a self-esteem evaluation instrument, a form to record reflections on the Literature Circle experience, release forms, literature circle monthly meeting calendars, role sheets, and a teacher observation record sheet. (Author/RS)

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The Relationship Between Self-Esteem and Reading

By

Carol Richardson

A thesis submitted in partial fulfillment

of the requirements in the

Master of Arts Degree in Reading Specialization

Kean University

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Abstract

The purpose of the study was to investigate the impact self-esteem had on reading with children of diverse reading levels using a modified reading program.

Three students were targeted in the study. For the purpose of identification for this research, targeted students were assigned pseudonyms that signified to research only, who they were. The identities were completely anonymous to everyone else. Targeted students were part of a class in which reading levels ranged from a 2.0-3.0-grade equivalency. The three students were chosen because of their regular attendance record and differentiated reading levels. Students read different self-esteem novels on their actual reading levels in a modified version of Literature Circles. Two girls and one boy were chosen for study; Susan identified as superior, Maria identified as the midpoint of the population, and Juan identified as less able in reading. A profile of the academic performance of the three students is provided in table 4.

In order to analyze the collected data, research was broken down into three types of data; interpretation of the results from pre-test and post-test, the information obtained from the actual samples of work by the students, and the information obtained from the observations made at the time of the study. Each targeted student was observed individually to see how the intervention impacted each one. Improvements, setbacks, and other factors that arose during the study were observed. Conclusions were drawn from these evaluations and results determined. Research lasted approximately six weeks. For continuity sake, targeted students were discussed one at a time from start to finish.

Literature Review

Self-Esteem and Reading

Before exploring the link between self-esteem and reading, it seems worthwhile to clarify the term self-esteem. In reviewing the literature, it becomes clear that definitive research on self-esteem has been difficult due to the variety of definitions. Self-esteem is a widely used concept within popular language and in psychology. Blascovich and Tamaqua (1991) found self-esteem referred to an individual's sense of his or her value or worth, or the extent to which a person valued, approved or appreciated prizes, or liked him or herself. The most broad and frequently cited definition of self-esteem within psychology was Rosenberg's (1965), who described it as "a favorable or unfavorable attitude toward the self" (p. 15).

Bednar, Wells, and Peterson (1989) defined self-esteem "as a subjective and realistic self-approval" (p.4). They point out "self-esteem reflects how the most fundamental levels of psychological experiencing" (p. 4) and that different aspects of the self created a "profile of emotions associated with the various roles in which the person operated...and [that self-esteem] was an enduring and affective series of personal values based on accurate self-perceptions" (p. 4). Brandon (1997) defined self-esteem as "the disposition to experience oneself as being competent to cope with the basic challenges of life and of being worthy of happiness" (p. 2).

Definitions of self-esteem varied considerably in both their breadth and psychological sophistication. High self-esteem meant we appreciated our inherent worth and ourselves. More specifically, it meant we had a positive attitude, we evaluated ourselves highly, we were convinced of our own abilities, and we saw ourselves as

competent and powerful—we were in control of our own lives and able to do what we wanted. In addition, we compare ourselves favorably with others. We also know what it means to experience diminished self-esteem, self-depreciation, helplessness, powerlessness, and depression (Mecca, Smelter & Vasconcellos, 1989).

Purkey (1988) believed it would help us to better understand self-esteem by differentiating self-concept from self-esteem. He found self-concept was the totality of a complex, organized and dynamic system of learned beliefs, attitudes and opinions that each person held to be true about his or her personal existence. Crocker and Major (1989) stated sociologists emphasized the importance of reflected appraisals in the development of the self-concept for many years. Sociologists believed the “awareness of how others evaluate the self and the adaptation of those others views combined to form the concept of the self” (p. 610). Rosenberg (1979) believed self-concept was slow forming, with many changes taking place in middle childhood and adolescence, and that the self-concept is never static but continues to change throughout one’s life. Stanwyck (1983) clarified self-concept by saying that although self-concept may be viewed as how one sees him or herself, self-esteem is “how I feel about how I see myself” (p. 11).

Mack (1983) found “The preschool child’s hierarchy of valuable parts of the self is based on his or her mode of self-conceptualization, competencies, identifications with parental qualities, roles, and values, and the developing superego and ego ideal” (p. 133). Mack also described self-esteem as a conscious process, which is thought about and described. It was also an unconscious process, reflecting an individual’s inner psychic structure. Individuals with positive self-esteem tended to feel proud, worthy,

enthusiastic, and effective, while those with negative self-esteem tended to feel shameful, unworthy, and helpless.

Positive self-esteem was so basic a task of development that children often saw it as necessary for survival. The development and protection of self-esteem was one of the central developmental tasks throughout life (Mack, 1983). According to Mack, "the capacity to attract the parent, to use relational skills to bring about the fulfillment of needs and wants, is the earliest test of childhood competence and self-worth" (p. 25). Self-esteem is influenced by relationships within the family, those between children and parents, as well as those between siblings. Birth order affected an individual's personality development; parents treated older children differently than younger children. Older siblings exhibited personality traits that differed from their younger siblings. Specifically, firstborn children tended to have higher self-esteem than later born children.

Fable (1991) found similarities in his research. Birth category affected a person's level of self-esteem. Falbo conducted a study to examine the relationship between birth order and certain personality characteristics. Fable had 841 male and 944 female undergraduate students complete several personality instruments and a background questionnaire, including a 16-item device used to measure self-esteem. Falbo discovered self-esteem was higher among firstborn children than later born children. In addition, he learned firstborn children tended to be more competitive than their younger siblings.

An individual's relation to his siblings affected his self-image and self-esteem. Gates, Line Berger, Crockett, and Hubbard's (1988) findings agreed with the findings of Mack (1983) and Falbo (1981). They conducted a study about birth order and how it related to depression, anxiety, and self-concept. Gates et al. used three different scales,

including one designed to measure the level of self-concept. The children questioned ranged in ages from 7 to 12 and were selected from public and private schools. All items were read to the children to account for possible differences in reading levels. Gates et al. found the self-concept scores were higher for firstborn children than second-born and youngest-born children. A high self-concept score indicated a high level of self-esteem.

Researchers found self-esteem affects achievement. Covington (1989) reported as the level of self-esteem increased, so did achievement scores; as self-esteem decreased, achievement scores declined. Furthermore, he concluded self-esteem was modified through direct instruction and that such instruction led to achievement gains.

Holly (1987) also found achievement was affected by self-esteem. Students' perceived efficacy to achieve, combined with personal goal setting, was found to have a major impact on academic achievement. Holly (1987) compiled a summary of some 50 studies and indicated most researchers supported the idea that self-esteem was more likely the result than the cause of academic achievement. He acknowledged that a certain level of self-esteem was required in order for a student to achieve academic success and that self-esteem and achievement go hand in hand. They feed each other.

Self-esteem was reported as an important goal of education. In addition, helping children to "feel good about them" was frequently listed as an important goal of early education. For example, the National Association of Elementary School Principals (1990) listed the development of "a positive self-image" first among the characteristics of a good quality early childhood program. One newsletter for teachers stated, "the basis for everything we do is self-esteem. Therefore, if we can do something to give children a strong sense of themselves, starting in preschool, they'll be [a lot wiser] in the choices

they make" (Mc Daniel, 1986 (p.1). One of the difficulties in trying to reach agreement on the nature of self-esteem was due to the fact that it had been approached from several different perspectives. Some saw it as a psychodynamic, developmental process; others have approached it from the perspective of the cognitive-behaviorist in terms of various coping strategies; others have viewed it from the position of a social psychologist in terms of attitudes, while others have focused on the experimental dimensions of self-esteem as a humanistic psychologist. Since self-esteem had both psychological and sociological dimensions, this made it difficult to come up with a comprehensive definition, and rarely have both dimensions been taken into consideration together in conducting research studies (Reasoner, 1992). There was, however, general agreement that the term self-esteem included cognitive, affective, and behavioral elements.

Components of Self-Esteem

Several researchers have defined the three components of self esteem.

Cognitive Element

Reasoner (1992) defined the cognitive element of self-esteem as someone who thinks about oneself as one considers the discrepancy between one's ideal self, the person one wishes to be and the perceived self or the realistic appraisal of how one sees oneself.

Affective Element

Gordon, Sheridan & Paul, (1996); Irvin, (1998); Mizokawa & Hansen-Krening, (2000) discovered the affective element of self-esteem refers to the feelings of emotions, motivations, attitude, perception, interest and associations related to past learning experiences, and feelings generated by words and events in the learning situation.

Behavioral Element

Reasoner (1992) believed the behavioral element teaches children to adopt specific behaviors to be able to express themselves confidently so others will relate to them in a positive manner. Activities focus on posture, voice, and the manner in which they deal with others. Through this element many individuals who see themselves as victims take a more assertive approach and are no longer treated as victims.

The Relationship Between Self-Esteem and Reading

White (no date) found a strong link between a child's self-esteem and his or her academic success. Children who feel good about themselves learned more easily and retained information longer. In fact, they did better in every way. If they had a sense of well being they were much more likely to be able to handle the ups and downs of daily life, including prejudice, abuse, addiction, delinquency and violence.

Concern about students' reading abilities was expressed at local, state, and national levels as well as in the broader political arena. President Clinton announced in a State of the Union address in 1996 that it was a national priority that every child read by the end of third grade. Many states including California, Texas, and Maryland declared reading initiatives and redesigned curricula and teacher standards (Bryant, D. P. Dickson, S. Young, C., 2001). Most, if not all, of these efforts aimed at improving reading have addressed the reading problems of students in kindergarten through third grade (Snow, Burns & Griffin, 1998). Students who struggled with reading in the early grades were unlikely to improve considerably over time; fewer than one child in eight who was failing to read by the end of first grade ever caught up to grade level (Juel, 1988; Torgesen & Burgess, 1998). Middle-school students struggled with reading and learning from text

because of reading disabilities, reading problems, and inadequate instruction (Greene, 1998; Williams, Brown, Silverstein, & de Cari, 1994).

Ten sixth-grade middle school teachers and their 60-targeted students (14 students with reading disabilities, 17 low-achieving students and 29 average-achieving students) participated in a four month professional development and intervention program to enhance reading outcomes. The multi-component reading intervention included three reading strategies: word identification, fluency, and content area comprehension. All three groups proved in accuracy of oral reading and fluency. Although many students made significant gains in word identification, fluency, and comprehension, a subgroup of very poor readers made little or no gains.

Bryant, Vaught, Linan-Thompson, Ugel, Hamff and Hougen (2000) found teachers cited problems with decoding skills, indicating students struggled with multisyllabic words at the expense of comprehension. Teachers explained that the students' limited vocabulary and comprehension strategies presented numerous challenges for teaching content area subject matter and for using text-based material. Teachers indicated they thought the struggling students had a poor self-image, low self-esteem, and low expectations for themselves. One teacher captured the resulting motivational issue, which was also mentioned by several other teachers: "We'll have some students who, I guess are so far behind and have been down so long they don't even have the want to improve" (p. 256). Students who lacked genuine purposes for the reading tended to dislike reading or experienced difficulty-finding reasons to read (Ivey, 1999; Worthy & Mc Kool, 1996; Worthy, Moorman & Turner, 1999).

In a recent study, Mc Cray, Baughn and Neal (2001), interviewed twenty middle school students with reading related learning disabilities on two occasions to better understand their perceptions about a) their reading ability, b) procedures used to assist with reading instruction, and c) reading instruction that might improve their reading ability. Asking a series of questions followed up Students' responses: a) "Who is a good reader?" and b) "Who is a poor reader that you know? What makes him or her a poor reader?" Examples of their comments indicated that many of them made distinctions between good and poor readers by relating to how well these individuals demonstrated skill in word recognition, decoding, reading fluency, and reading comprehension. For instance a seventh-grade student stated:

My classmate is a good reader [because] he reads fast and people understand. He reads slow enough that we can hear him and understand what he is saying. If he doesn't know how to pronounce a word he sounds it out. (p.21)

Another student identified a poor reader in her classroom: "Sometimes Mark gets things all wrong, and the teacher needs to help him" (p. 21). The participants described poor readers as those unable to read material quickly with few uncorrected errors and to recall and comprehend what they read. Moreover, students believed that in addition to deficits in basic reading skills, reading difficulties were also attributed to poor motivation, lack of confidence and self-esteem, and fear of embarrassment in front of peers. One student said:

Every time the teacher tells him to read, he says "No, no, no!" He just shrugs his shoulders and walks out of the classroom. He can't get the

words right. He is supposed to be in special education all of the time. The teacher tries to help him out. She helps him read. If he can't sound out a word, she gives the word to him. (p.22)

The participants were aware of their reading disability and the reading problems and abilities of peer mates (Mc Cray, Vaughn & Neal, 2001). Whether the goal was educating mentally healthy and functional students or students who performed well academically, teachers must make self-esteem development a primary focus. Talented people will not always succeed in life, but people with genuinely high self-esteem will find ways to (Shindler, no date).

The Cognitive Element and Reading

The cognitive element focuses on changing the manner in which individuals viewed their experience, to help them view things positively rather than negative aspects of their situation. They are taught that they have a choice in how they wish to perceive an event or experience, and that can be either positive or negative (Retrieve, no date). According to Hummel (1998), many preschool and primary programs were modeled on Piaget's theory, which provided parts of the foundation for constructivist learning. Bricklin (1991) found the relationship between feelings of self-worth and achievement was interactive and reciprocal, one feeding the other. Thus, the child whose self-descriptions included, "I am not a learner" and "I am no good at reading" was likely to view mistakes and failures as consistent with that view of self. That same child viewed any successes as "luck," "an accident," or "I wasn't really responsible." From this negative view of self, the child was not accessible to the best teaching efforts. No matter

how good instructional strategies to develop reading skills may be, if the child was not emotionally available to learn, learning would not take place.

Mc Cray (2001) believed a major psychological task for the growing child to master was the question, who am I? Through a process of role-playing and fantasy the child moved from a wish to replace his or her mother or father. The sense of self developed, then, through direct experience—primarily exploration and mastery. It is through this exploration and mastery that the child developed a sense of either “I am one who can” or “I am one who cannot,” with respect to various activities. In addition, Mc Cray noted students with disabilities had much to say about their reading ability, reading instruction, and commitment to learn and to read. They identified themselves as poor readers who experienced problems in word recognition, reading fluency, comprehension skills, and reading confidence. Further, they commented on their ongoing frustration over their poor reading skills, the inability to learn from reading skills, and the inability to learn from reading. They explained their failure to learn to read proficiently compromised their daily survival in and out of school and had long lasting effects into adulthood. A student named Shane stated:

Learning to read is extremely important because anything that you do involves reading—like math, science, and social studies. I’m a little bit dyslexic. It’s sometimes hard for me to read. I read the words on the blackboard backwards.... I tried to read the lunch menu and would get so frustrated, I just had to stop. I ate the same thing everyday at school because I couldn’t read the menu. (p.7)

Shane added, "My daddy can't read, and I can't read that good. He couldn't help me learn to read, and I guess I won't be able to help my kids to read neither if I don't get better at reading" (p. 7). All of the students questioned their future success as adults and in employment with such limited reading ability (Mc Cray, 2001). However, none of them doubted that their reading skills could improve, and thus they remained hopeful and determined to learn to read better. For example, despite a reading level of grade 2, a student named Shanika expressed her hope that her reading ability would continue to improve:

I am improving because at the beginning of the year I was reading on a first-grade level and now I'm reading on a second-grade reading level. I think I am getting a lot better. So probably next year I'll be on a fourth grade reading level and getting better. I think that I am getting better at reading novels. A month ago I was able to read 15 pages in a week. Last year I could only read 4 or 5 pages in a week (p.28)

A comment by another student stated:

The teacher said, "I'm giving you a test on this book and anyone who gets 70 and above will get to go outside longer." Well, she said that because she didn't expect me to get 70 or above, but I aced the test and got an 85. She's always promising us something because she doesn't think we can do it (p. 28).

David's words conveyed his willingness to keep trying to learn to read, despite years of failure (Mc Cray, 2001).

Two studies reported followed up on an initial investigation of classroom

dynamics and young children identified as at risk (AR) for developing learning, emotional and behavioral disorder (LD/EBD) (Lago-Dellelo, 1998). Measures were taken of teacher-student interactions, peer interactions, students' perceptions of their teachers' expectations, student self-perceptions, and academic engaged time. In the first study when the children were in grades 2 and 3, results replicated those of Lago-Dellelo (1998) conducted the previous year when the children were in grades 1 and 2. Findings supported a developmental progression for students at risk for LD/EBD with respect to perception of academic competence and self-concept as a function of classroom dynamics. It seems that until about eight years of age, students at risk for LD/LBD were generally unaware of their classroom teachers' negative behavior toward them and the preferential treatment of their classmates. Some time between 8 and 10 years of age, however, they seemed to become conscious of their teacher's negativity and low expectations and consequently, began to view themselves more negatively (Montague, 2001).

Students' perceptions of their teachers' expectations were related to student achievement and other school outcomes (Ames, 1992; Brattensani, Weinstein & Marshall, 1984; Skinner & Belmont, 1983). Specifically, positive perceptions of teacher expectation were associated with greater engagement in academics, better grades in school, and better behavior. The point at which children accurately perceived differential teacher treatment in the classroom and peer rejection to the extent that they began to perceive themselves negatively was not well understood. Some evidence suggested a developmental course where by children began to internalize the negativity directed toward them. Young children tended to be less accurate than older students to predict

teacher expectations and tended to report high perceptions of competence where as older students were more likely to perceive themselves in concordance with their perceptions of teacher expectations (Simonson & Strein, 1997; Weinstein, Marshall, Sharp, & Botkin, 1987).

Mc Combs' (1996) theory used an integrative framework combining skill, will, and social support strategies. Skill was defined as cognitive and metacognitive competency, which included an individual's self control and self-monitoring strategies. Will was defined as consisting of self-efficacy, choice, volition, and autonomy. When a student believed that she could learn, make choices about what to learn and how to go about it, and then independently execute the strategies necessary for learning, that student showed the "will" to learn. Social support was defined as the interpersonal context for the dimensions of both skill and will, through relationships with others. In an environment where learning is valued, a social network that supported a student's "skill" and "will" helped her learn information more effectively. This theory differs from others in that it more strongly emphasized not only a learner's perspective about what it meant to be motivated to learn, but also her beliefs about herself and learning.

Every "effect" becomes the "cause" of a subsequent effect, which in turn the cause of a subsequent effect. These continuous reciprocal interactions were particularly significant in the young person with learning or reading disabilities because they may influence not only the nature and severity of the difficulty in itself but also the perceptions and expectations of the child (self-concept), as well as the perception and expectations of important others who influence this developing self-concept (Bricklin, 1991).

For example, the child or adolescent's perception of the difficulty he or she had with reading or learning was "I'm dumb and that's why I don't understand what I read." A parent or teacher's perception was "If she would try harder, she could do it." These differing perceptions created a possible point of interactive discord and influenced the design of intervention (Bricklin & Gallico, 1986).

Thus, the sense of self as learner developed in an ecological context. For some children this defective self-concept developed early, out of repeated experiences with failure and being devalued by important others. The child came to school with a view of self that said, "I cannot." Other children developed a sense of self that says, "I cannot read," "I'm dumb," or "I'm no good in school," and this sense of self was developed in the school itself. Each of these children had a view of self as learner that said "I'm not a learner," complete with associated attributions about success and failure and a sense of powerlessness (Bricklin, 1991).

Gordon, (1996) examined self-concept, motivation and school environment factors among resilient (GPA of 2.75 or higher) and non-resilient Latino high school sophomores from low socioeconomic, stressful backgrounds. Resilient youths (n=9) believed more in their cognitive abilities and placed less emphasis on belongingness than the non-resilient youths (n=27). They also had stronger motivational patterns regarding their cognitive abilities, but weaker motivational patterns regarding belongingness. According to the Latino students mean scores, the school environment was less supportive with some of their goals and abilities, but not of their cognitive and belongingness goals, nor was it supportive in the extracurricular area. Although limited

in sample size, results provided school psychologists with some insights into the Latino population—a population that was rapidly expanding.

The Affective Element and Reading

Affect is an important consideration when working with middle school students. Worthy, Moorman & Turner (1999) found the middle school years were often a time when students lost interest in reading and began to develop negative attitudes toward reading. Cline & Kretke, (1980); Mc Kenna, Kear, & Ellsworth, (1995); Shapiro & White, (1991) found it went beyond conventional commentaries about middle school student apathy in general toward reading because it became more apparent that many young adolescents in the United States were not simply choosing to eschew reading in favor of other non-literate activity. Rather, as reports at the national, state, and local levels indicate millions of youngsters at the intermediate and middle school levels read below a fourth-grade level and experienced deficiencies in basic reading skills such as word recognition, decoding, reading fluency, and reading comprehension. At-risk readers face additional challenges in learning and conceptual change that affected motivation (Alvermann, Hynd & Quinn, 1995; Guzzetti, Snyder, Glass, & Gamas, 1993). Poor readers, however, found reading any text problematic. Perhaps because poor readers over relied on background knowledge (Spiro, 1980), they missed important counter-intuitive ideas even in text that highlighted those ideas (Hynd, Mc Nish, Lay, and Fowler, 1995). Thus, they were less likely to engage in conceptual change as a result of reading.

There are at least two reasons to investigate the attribution profiles of students with disabilities. First repeated experiences with academic failure put them at risk for developing helpless behaviors in school. Helpless behaviors, in turn, lead to decreased motivation toward school and lowered self-esteem (Glazer, 1991).

Observational studies of regular classrooms indicated that primary students spent 60 to 70 percent of their allocated reading time completing skill work. Recent research suggested that such emphasis on skills led children to form inaccurate and misleading conceptions about the task of reading. According to Johnston (1985), a number of studies revealed many poor readers believed that reading was primarily an oral performance involving decoding rather than a process for gaining meaning. Furthermore Johnston (1985), found lower expectations about what children in compensatory classes could achieve may, in fact, feed into the children's expectations about their own abilities and thus perpetuate low achievement. The importance of self-esteem and other affective factors in motivation has been re-emphasized by recent work in met cognition and strategic reading. Finally, children who spent the majority of their reading time involved in skills instruction did not get the opportunity to develop a love of reading. This may be why some many students who could read chose not to (Johnston, 1985).

Of all learning tasks, success in reading was most highly valued by the vast majority of society. There were a number of affective components necessary to become a successful reader. To learn to read, and later to apply reading skills, required assertiveness, risk taking, independence, and skills of interaction (Bricklin, 1991).

The Behavioral Element and Reading

The behavioral element of self-esteem tended to concentrate on behavior as a response to internal or external stimulation. This element has the modern application of the philosophical tradition of empiricism (Bemporad, 1980). Many students responded to reading and writing behaviors on the basis of their feelings and attitudes toward school, learning, and teachers. Children who had problems dealing with their feelings during reading and writing activities usually had learning difficulties (Gentile & Mc Millan, 1987). Children with problems probably encountered many failures in the school settings; these failures resulted in emotional stress for the child, as well as for the peers and adults in the child's life. These emotional responses resulted in reading difficulties but they also caused the difficulties to happen. Gates (1941) estimated that among cases of severe reading disability about 75% demonstrated an emotional maladjustment in the school setting. In about 25%, the emotional difficulty contributed to failure in reading and related tasks.

Current research in reading and writing and the emotional aspects associated with successes was minimal. Although a poor self-concept and poor achievement in reading were related, it is not clear which was cause and which was effect. It is also not clear when the sense of inadequacy and inferiority concerning reading and writing developed. Erikson (1963) found children developed a sense of industry in their work when they were "doing things beside and with others" (p.260).

Students who experienced academic failures in reading and other school subjects tend to be rejected by teachers and peers. They developed feelings of inferiority and feelings of inadequacy when using the tools and skills necessary to perform with and among their peers. Students were aware of the perceptions others had of their abilities

and made the assumption that they were "stupid" (Lang, 1976; Serafic & Harway, 1979). These feelings often resulted in school—related anxiety (Neville, Pfof & Dobbs, 1967) and low self-esteem (Athey, 1982; Thomson & Hartley, 1980). Self-perception of being rejected by others predisposed a child to react aggressively when in an ambiguous social situation, whereas children with high self-concepts were less threatened and therefore less likely to respond with aggression (Edens, Cavell, & Hughes, 1999; Hay, 2000). When children did not achieve as expected or desired they developed a resistance to going to school, a reluctance to grow up, or a defiance of adult authority. These children usually had difficulty paying attention and staying on task. To read and write, attention to task was necessary. Egan and Perry (1998) examined relations between general self-concept, social self-concept, victimization, and psychopathology (internalizing behaviors related to delinquent and aggressive behaviors such as stealing, lying, getting into fights, and threatening to hurt other people). Factors were related to three components of self-concept (general, same sex, and opposite sex) based on the large, nationally representative National Education Longitudinal Study of 1988 database. At 8th, 10th and 12th grade levels, trouble maker and victim constructs were reasonably stable over time and moderately positively correlated (many students were both trouble makers and victims). The victim factor was negatively correlated with self-concept and had negative effects on subsequent self-concept whereas, the trouble-maker factor was also correlated somewhat negatively with self-concept; it had small positive effects on subsequent self-concept. Results showed low self-concept was associated with aggressive school behavior.

Anxiety, low self-esteem, and the high value placed on success in reading and writing by parents and teachers often resulted in resistance to learning and unhappiness. Among the family process variables that seemed to be most important to children's academic performance was parents' educational expectations for their children, which consistently had been a strong predictor of student achievement at all age levels, beginning with first grade (Intwisle & Alexander, 1990), to upper elementary school (Marjoribanks, 1987), to high school (Ainley, Foreman & Sheret, 1991) and beyond (Conklin & Dailey 1981), and for students from a wide range of racial and ethnic backgrounds (Chung & Walkey, 1989; Mickelson, 1990). Researchers explored the relationship between parent expectations for their children and various family structure variables like socioeconomic level (Seginer, 1983), single-parent versus two-parent homes (Thompson, Alexander, & Entwisle, 1988), and cultural differences (Chen & Uttal, 1988). Yet, the complex nature of parental expectations, including how they are formed in relationship to other psychosocial variable and what effect these expectations had in connection with other social psychological and family climate variables for certain children within specific family contexts, has yet to be fully explored. However, the strong relationship between parents' expectations for their children and the children's own expectations for themselves, especially during the high school years, has been fairly well established (Trusty & Pirtle, 1998).

A number of investigators reported that level of self-esteem, or self-rejection, had a moderating effect on situational, behavioral, and psychological relationships. An examination of the literature on the moderating effect on the characteristic level of self-esteem indicated concerned situational adversity. Persons with higher self-esteem

responded to the adversity that likely provided an episodic threat to their self-esteem with less maladaptive responses than those with characteristically low self-esteem (Kaplan, 1996).

Gorman (1998) studied the moderating effect that parents' negative self-feelings, or lack of negative self-feelings, had on the relationship between parents' educational level and their aspirations for their children. The hypothesized extent to which parents felt positively or negatively about themselves regarding their attaining a certain level of education and the extent to which children were aware of these feelings affected children's perceptions of their parents' educational expectations. Therefore, parents who were content with their station in life transmitted this contentment to their children. In his examination of the relationship between social class and attitudes toward education, Gorman described the differences in the educational expectations of middle class and working class parents as a function of their own previous educational experiences, their current occupational experiences, and the "hidden injuries of class." Gorman examined the moderating effects of parents' negative self-feelings on the relationship between parental educational level and children's perceptions of their parents' educational expectations. Results provided a preliminary indications that parents' expectations could be modified by how parents felt about themselves. Those modifying effects were explained in terms of both parents' and students' motivation and behavior.

In addition, parental support was another vital instrument in the development of children's sense of personal competence and control (Ginsburg & Bronstein, 1993), which, in turn, related to children's use of academic self-regulatory behaviors (Feldman, Martinez-Pons & Shaham, 1995; Aimmerman, Bandura & Mrtinez-Pons, 1992).

(Ginsburg & Bronstein (1993) found the study was designed to examine whether parental emotional support played a role after controlling for the meta-cognitive content and manner of delivery of parent's instructions. The study examined the effectiveness of 3 aspects of parental instruction for predicting children's self-regulation in school. Fathers, mothers, and their children (52 families) were visited in their homes the summer before the child entered 3rd grade. Metacognition content (task and strategy information), manner of instruction (small steps at an appropriate pace), and emotional support were coded from parents' instructions to their children for a problem-solving task. Children's self-regulatory behaviors in the classroom were assessed the following year: attention to instructions, seeking help, monitoring progress, involvement in class, and metacognitive talk. Patterns of relations were observed. Manner of instruction predicted children's attention to instructions and help seeking in the classroom. Metacognitive content of instructions did not predict these aspects of self-regulation. In contrast, metacognitive content of instructions presented in an understandable manner with emotional support predicted children's monitoring and metacognitive talk.

School and teachers were often responsible for emotional deficits related to school subjects. Children who had difficulty learning to read and write were often punished. Punishment was sometimes direct, but often it was indirect (i.e. "Jim, will you help Tom with his reading?"). In addition, teachers often deprived students of recess, playtime, or physical activities so that they could complete reading tasks (Glazer, 1991). Children with problems were often asked to read aloud in front of peers. Punitive types of activities led to peer embarrassment and feelings of inadequacy (Glazer, 1991).

A review of numerous research studies indicated that there is evidence that children's self-esteem could be enhanced by teachers' encouragement of self-rewarding behavior on the part of their students. With increasing self-esteem came improvement in academic performance which, in turn, enhanced self-esteem. Further, above average levels of self-esteem were associated positively with better adjustment, more independence, less defensive and deviant behavior, and greater social effectiveness and acceptance of others (Gurney, 1987).

Summary

The synthesis of the ideas growing out of psychological inquires into the self, and the application of these ideas to reading governed the following portion of my research.

The relationship of self-esteem and reading is grounded upon three theoretical assumptions: 1) self-concept influences reading behavior; 2) an individual's perceptions of ability to read affect the level of intelligence; and 3) the self grows through reading with through individual, and group interactions whether it be peers, family or professionals. This review of literature has attempted to outline the links between this current study and its appropriate antecedents in the self-esteem theory, the elements of self-esteem, and its effect on reading.

The effects of current research trends and theory adjustments have resulted in an increased awareness of reading attitudes and the relationship between attitude and performance in reading. The development of psychological profiles of researchers through measurement of self-esteem and other personality referents provides important information for teachers and researchers for instruction in and assessment of reading.

These affective elements add another dimension to self-esteem theory and reading thereby extending the range of instruction and research.

The measurement of self-esteem and reading ability, identification of cognitive, affective and behavioral elements in reading represent the concerns which beckoned this researcher in the formulation of this study. Coming to grips with this assortment of impulses on one hand, and realizing the need for a meaningful analysis on the other is the dilemma I will be facing in the construction of a research design, which hopefully will accommodate all of these issues.

Problem

The problem driving this research is to discover if self-esteem can be built through the use of a modified reading program. As the literature review shows, there has been extensive work done on self-esteem and reading. One area which needs further investigating is however, the basic literacy skills of limited literacy, middle school resource students, that is their ability to read, write, and communicate successfully with their peers and the world around them. A limited literacy student is a one who identified as experiencing difficulties with literacy tasks and is functioning two or more grade levels below average peers. Limited literacy students are not slow learners; they have potential, but are not yet working to their predicted potential.

In all publications concerning the benefits of self-esteem and reading on children, one of the most often cited factors is an increase in self-esteem when students are working cooperatively in a group setting. Researchers found self-esteem affects achievement. Covington (1989) reported as the level of self-esteem increased, so did achievement scores; as self-esteem decreased, achievement scores declined.

Given the close link between self-esteem and reading, a reading program such as literature circles with modifications was implemented in order to examine what impact a cooperative literacy intervention may have on students' self-esteem. Erickson (1963) found children developed a sense of industry in their work when they were "doing things beside and with others" (p.260). A review of numerous research studies indicated that there is evidence that children's self-esteem could be enhanced by teachers' encouragement of self-rewarding behavior on the part of their students. A study

investigating the impact of a modified version of literature circles is a valuable extension to what is already known about self-esteem and reading.

Methodology

Three students were targeted in order to monitor different attitudes toward reading according to their reading abilities ranging from the highest level to the lowest level reader.

Participants. Three pull out sixth grade resource students were the subjects of this study. The three students were one boy and two girls in a lower middle class school from the Perth Amboy Public School District. The students were part of a district consisting of 87% minority children from Hispanic backgrounds. The students were part of a classroom that was heterogeneously grouped. Two of the target students were Hispanic and one was Caucasian. They were twelve years old. The students' reading levels were two and three grades below average. They were currently performing on the second to third grade reading level. The class in which these students were a part of was labeled basic skilled in the areas of Language Arts, Reading and Math due to their needing extra time on tasks; needing skills presented in small steps; and the need for individualized instruction and support. These students had the opportunity to participate in regular classes/activities in the following areas: science, social studies, physical education, lunch, scheduled assemblies and school trips. These students received the benefit of increased opportunities to socialize with their general education peers. In their special education (resource pull-out) classes, they benefited from individualized instruction and support and highly structured, small-group setting that it provided. Other benefits included increased self-esteem and self-confidence.

Targeted students were chosen because of their regular attendance record and their differentiated grade levels:

Juan was a twelve-year-old Hispanic male. He appeared to be a visual/tactile learner. He had performed on a 2.0 grade level in reading. Juan often became discouraged from completing his work. When given the opportunity to respond orally to questions rather than having him write answers, Juan's outcomes were more productive.

Maria was an outgoing twelve year old, Hispanic female. In addition, she was short tempered. She was shy and timid around strangers and would not initiate conversation unless she was spoken to first. Maria had performed on a 2.5 grade level in reading. One of the strategies that she had learned to use when reading was memorization. Despite this, she was unable to retain information. Maria loved attending school although she had difficulty reading.

Susan was a twelve-year-old Caucasian female. She functioned on a 3.0 grade level in reading. Her greatest strength was in sight word vocabulary. Other strengths included her oral reading ability and her basic decoding ability. Susan had trouble staying focused on her ability to comprehend cause and effect. She was a quiet and conscientious student. Materials. Information from three sources were used to establish past and current base lines.

1. Deberry Reading Attitude Survey www.cameron.edu/~pauld/DRAS.html (see Appendix A). This survey identified students' attitudes toward reading in three areas, which include Reading for Fun, Reading When Required, and composite Reading Attitude percentiles. Students circled the picture and words that best described how they felt about that question. Scoring involved dividing the total points the student scored in

questions 1-13 by 52. This number was the student's reading for fun percentile. Finally, by dividing the total points the student scored in questions 14-25 by 100. This number was the student's composite reading percentile.

2. Barksdale Self-Esteem Evaluation www.barksdale.org/Evaluation (see Appendix B).

This evaluation measured current level of Self-Esteem Index (SEI), and served as a gauge of students' progress in achieving sound self-esteem. Students shaded circles according to how they actually felt or behaved. Each score showed how true or the amount of time students' believe that statement is true for them (0 = not at all true for me to 4 = true all the time). The possible range of the Self-Esteem index is 0-100. Sound self-esteem was indicated by an SEI of 95 or more. Good self-esteem was indicated by a score of 90 to 94. Experience shows that any score under 90 is a disadvantage, a score of 75 or less is a serious handicap, and an SEI of 50 or less indicates a really crippling lack of self-esteem.

3. Teacher-made Reflection Form (see Appendix C). These forms were used every other week to monitor and evaluate students' performances during literature circles. Students responded by completing an open-ended prompt of their Literature Circle experience,

During the past two weeks of Literature Circle, I felt.....

4. Parental Permission Letter (see Appendix D). This letter indicated consent by parents for their child to be included in the study.

5. Monthly Meeting Calendar (see Appendix E). This monthly calendar showed the days of group meetings for the literature circles

6. Novels 2.0-3.0 Reading Levels

"Be a Perfect Person in Just Three Days" by Stephen Mane

"The Summer of the Swans" by Betsy Byars

"J.T." by Jane Wagner

7. Role Sheets (see Appendix F) These forms guided the students as they read, prepared and discussed each chapter.

8. Teacher Observation Record (see Appendix G) This form provided the researcher with feedback to help them to continually monitor students' progress.

Procedure. Approval was given by the school district in order to conduct research. Once permission had been granted, letters were sent home to parents asking for permission to include their child in this study (see Appendix D).

The research period lasted approximately 6 weeks. The study was conducted first by having a trial practice for a week. Students were introduced to their literature circle roles and understood the format as participants. The students were informed that this research was strictly voluntary.

Literature roles were limited to four categories (summarizer, vocabulary enhancer, connector, and illustrator). A modified format was used along with three shorter chapter books for which there were multiple copies. Using three groups of four students each, there were approximately four copies of each book, plus one of each for myself. A challenging book, an average book, and an easy book were used to meet the individual needs of each student. Readings were selected for which each element and lessons were developed. Appropriate circles were chosen for each student (generally according to his/her level). Each book was divided into three sections always ending each assignment at the end of a chapter. Meetings of groups were on Tuesdays, Wednesdays and Thursdays. Meetings tried to be kept the same day of the week for each group. Each group received a calendar for meeting times. For each book, students were allowed some

independent time to answer the Literature Circle Reflection Forms (see Appendix C). Role Sheets were readily available in the classroom. Each week the students rotated the roles until every student had his/her turn performing each role. During the teacher group meetings the Reflection Forms were discussed. Each group and individual members were evaluated using the Teacher Observation Record (see Appendix G).

Data Analysis: Data for the research was collected through

1. The results of the Literature Circle Reflection Forms were examined to see students' self-expressions of their experience during activity.
First, the researcher analyzed the content of the targeted reflection forms in writing and observed responses by color-coding response patterns. Next, the researcher looked for increased trends of self-esteem in reading. Finally, the researcher examined which students were successful expressing positive feelings towards the literature circle intervention and which students needed more encouragement.
2. The results of the reading attitude survey pretest and posttest were examined to measure any changes in student' attitudes toward reading before and after study.
3. The results of the self-esteem questionnaire pretest and posttest were examined to measure any changes in students' self-esteem before and after study.
4. The completed literature circle role sheets were examined and evaluated by researcher for content, clear understanding of the chapters read, and completion of assignments.

5. The teacher observation record was examined and transcribed along with the conversations during group interaction to provide information to researcher about students' successes and struggles.

Results

Juan

The first targeted student selected for this study was Juan. He was chosen because he was rather low in reading ability. Juan rarely applies any effort. He was quiet and soft-spoken and occasionally too shy to ask questions. Juan often fell behind in his lessons and seldom completed seatwork or homework assignments.

Pre and Post-Test Results

Both The Barksdale Self-Esteem Evaluation (see appendix B) and The DeBerry Reading Aptitude Survey (see appendix A) was used as data before and after the study. As shown in Table 1, an analysis of Juan's responses on The Barksdale Self-Esteem Evaluation showed a SEI score of 47 on the pre-tests, which is considered a crippling lack of self-esteem. Out of 25 statements, Juan responded discouragingly to 11 statements. Juan's post-test increased to a score of 64, which is considered a serious handicap. When pre-test and post-test were color coded to indicate consistency, six of the eleven discouraging statements from his pre-test still remained after completing the post-test along with an added negative response. Those statements were as follows:

Statement 1- I don't feel anyone else is better than I am.

Statement 3- I am a happy, carefree person.

Statement 4- I have no need to prove I am as good as or better than others.

Table 1 Juan's Pre-test and Post-test Results

Barksdale Self-esteem Evaluation Data
DeBerry's Reading Attitude Survey

Table 1 Pre-test
Juan's Self-Esteem Evaluation
Statements
Score 47

1. I don't feel anyone else is better than I am. ☐ 1 ☐ 2 ☐ 3 ☐ 4

2. I am free of shame, blame, and guilt. ☐ 1 ☐ 2 ☐ 3 ☐ 4

3. I am a happy, carefree person. ☐ 1 ☐ 2 ☐ 3 ☐ 4

4. I have no need to prove I am as good as or better than others. ☐ 1 ☐ 2 ☐ 3 ☐ 4

5. I do not have a strong need for people to pay attention to me or like what I do. ☐ 1 ☐ 2 ☐ 3 ☐ 4

6. Learning does not upset me or make me feel "less than" others. ☐ 1 ☐ 2 ☐ 3 ☐ 4

7. I feel warm and loving toward myself. ☐ 1 ☐ 2 ☐ 3 ☐ 4

8. I do not feel others are better than I am because they can do things better, have more money, or are more popular. ☐ 1 ☐ 2 ☐ 3 ☐ 4

9. I am at ease with strangers and make friends easily. ☐ 1 ☐ 2 ☐ 3 ☐ 4

10. I speak up for my own ideas, likes, and dislikes. ☐ 1 ☐ 2 ☐ 3 ☐ 4

11. I am not hurt by others' opinions or attitudes. ☐ 1 ☐ 2 ☐ 3 ☐ 4

12. I do not need praise to feel good about myself. ☐ 1 ☐ 2 ☐ 3 ☐ 4

13. I feel good about others' good luck and winning. ☐ 1 ☐ 2 ☐ 3 ☐ 4

14. I do not feel sad with my family, friends, or others. ☐ 1 ☐ 2 ☐ 3 ☐ 4

15. I do not feel I must always please others. ☐ 1 ☐ 2 ☐ 3 ☐ 4

16. I am open and honest, and not afraid of letting people see my real self. ☐ 1 ☐ 2 ☐ 3 ☐ 4

17. I am friendly, thoughtful, and generous toward others. ☐ 1 ☐ 2 ☐ 3 ☐ 4

18. I do not blame others for my problems and mistakes. ☐ 1 ☐ 2 ☐ 3 ☐ 4

19. I enjoy being alone with myself. ☐ 1 ☐ 2 ☐ 3 ☐ 4

20. I accept compliments and gifts without feeling uncomfortable or needing to give something in return. ☐ 1 ☐ 2 ☐ 3 ☐ 4

21. I admit my mistakes and failures without feeling ashamed or "less than." ☐ 1 ☐ 2 ☐ 3 ☐ 4

22. I feel no need to defend what I think, say, or do. ☐ 1 ☐ 2 ☐ 3 ☐ 4

23. I do not need others to agree with me or tell me I'm right. ☐ 1 ☐ 2 ☐ 3 ☐ 4

24. I do not brag about myself, what I have done, or what my family has or does. ☐ 1 ☐ 2 ☐ 3 ☐ 4

25. I do not feel "put down" when criticized by my friends or others. ☐ 1 ☐ 2 ☐ 3 ☐ 4

Pre-test
DeBerry Reading Attitude Survey

Juan Administrator
Date

Guide:

😊 = 2.66 points
😐 = 1.33 points
😞 = 0 points
☹ = NOT AT ALL

1. 2.66 2. 4.0 3. 0 4. 0 5. 0
6. 0 7. 0 8. 0 9. 2.66 10. 4.0
11. 0 12. 0 13. 0
14. 0 15. 0 16. 0 17. 0 18. 4.0 19. 4.0
20. 0 21. 0 22. 4.0 23. 4.0 24. 4.0 25. 0

Points 1-13: 17.33 Total Points 14-25: 30

(Reading for Fun) (Reading when Required)

Total Points 1-25: 37.33

CALCULATED READING ATTITUDE
PERCENTILE RANK

(WITH 100% AS COMPLETELY POSITIVE ABOUT READING)

Directions: Divide the total points the student scored in questions 1-13 by 13. Enter this number in the student's Reading for Fun percentile. Divide the total points the student scored in questions 14-25 by 12. Enter this number in the student's Reading when Required percentile. Divide the total points the student scored in questions 1-25 by 25. Enter this number in the student's composite Reading percentile.

Reading for Fun: 33 % Reading when Required: 42 %
Reading Attitude: 37%

Table 1 Post-test
Juan's Self-Esteem Evaluation
Statements
Score 64

1. I don't feel anyone else is better than I am. ☐ 1 ☐ 2 ☐ 3 ☐ 4

2. I am free of shame, blame, and guilt. ☐ 1 ☐ 2 ☐ 3 ☐ 4

3. I am a happy, carefree person. ☐ 1 ☐ 2 ☐ 3 ☐ 4

4. I have no need to prove I am as good as or better than others. ☐ 1 ☐ 2 ☐ 3 ☐ 4

5. I do not have a strong need for people to pay attention to me or like what I do. ☐ 1 ☐ 2 ☐ 3 ☐ 4

6. Learning does not upset me or make me feel "less than" others. ☐ 1 ☐ 2 ☐ 3 ☐ 4

7. I feel warm and loving toward myself. ☐ 1 ☐ 2 ☐ 3 ☐ 4

8. I do not feel others are better than I am because they can do things better, have more money, or are more popular. ☐ 1 ☐ 2 ☐ 3 ☐ 4

9. I am at ease with strangers and make friends easily. ☐ 1 ☐ 2 ☐ 3 ☐ 4

10. I speak up for my own ideas, likes, and dislikes. ☐ 1 ☐ 2 ☐ 3 ☐ 4

11. I am not hurt by others' opinions or attitudes. ☐ 1 ☐ 2 ☐ 3 ☐ 4

12. I do not need praise to feel good about myself. ☐ 1 ☐ 2 ☐ 3 ☐ 4

13. I feel good about others' good luck and winning. ☐ 1 ☐ 2 ☐ 3 ☐ 4

14. I do not feel sad with my family, friends, or others. ☐ 1 ☐ 2 ☐ 3 ☐ 4

15. I do not feel I must always please others. ☐ 1 ☐ 2 ☐ 3 ☐ 4

16. I am open and honest, and not afraid of letting people see my real self. ☐ 1 ☐ 2 ☐ 3 ☐ 4

17. I am friendly, thoughtful, and generous toward others. ☐ 1 ☐ 2 ☐ 3 ☐ 4

18. I do not blame others for my problems and mistakes. ☐ 1 ☐ 2 ☐ 3 ☐ 4

19. I enjoy being alone with myself. ☐ 1 ☐ 2 ☐ 3 ☐ 4

20. I accept compliments and gifts without feeling uncomfortable or needing to give something in return. ☐ 1 ☐ 2 ☐ 3 ☐ 4

21. I admit my mistakes and failures without feeling ashamed or "less than." ☐ 1 ☐ 2 ☐ 3 ☐ 4

22. I feel no need to defend what I think, say, or do. ☐ 1 ☐ 2 ☐ 3 ☐ 4

23. I do not need others to agree with me or tell me I'm right. ☐ 1 ☐ 2 ☐ 3 ☐ 4

24. I do not brag about myself, what I have done, or what my family has or does. ☐ 1 ☐ 2 ☐ 3 ☐ 4

25. I do not feel "put down" when criticized by my friends or others. ☐ 1 ☐ 2 ☐ 3 ☐ 4

Table 1 Post-test
DeBerry Reading Attitude Survey

Student Juan Administrator
Grade Date

Scoring Guide:

😊 = 2.66 points
😐 = 1.33 points
😞 = 0 points
☹ = NOT AT ALL

1. 2.66 2. 4.0 3. 0 4. 0 5. 0
6. 1.33 7. 0 8. 0 9. 2.66 10. 4.0
11. 4.0 12. 0 13. 0
14. 0 15. 0 16. 0 17. 0 18. 4.0 19. 4.0
20. 1.33 21. 0 22. 4.0 23. 4.0 24. 4.0 25. 0

Total Points 1-13: 18.33 Total Points 14-25: 21.33

(Reading for Fun) (Reading when Required)

Total Points 1-25: 39.65

CALCULATED READING ATTITUDE
PERCENTILE RANK

(WITH 100% AS COMPLETELY POSITIVE ABOUT READING)

Directions: Divide the total points the student scored in questions 1-13 by 13. Enter this number in the student's Reading for Fun percentile. Divide the total points the student scored in questions 14-25 by 12. Enter this number in the student's Reading when Required percentile. Divide the total points the student scored in questions 1-25 by 25. Enter this number in the student's composite Reading percentile.

Reading for Fun: 35 % Reading when Required: 44 %
Reading Attitude: 36 %

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Statement 16- I do not feel I must always please others.

Statement 23- I do not need others to agree with me or tell me I'm right.

Additional statement 11-I am not hurt by others opinion or attitudes.

The second test was the DeBerry Reading Aptitude Survey (see Appendix A), which measured student attitudes towards reading in three areas; Reading For Fun, Reading When Required, and Reading Attitude. Juan's pre-test were calculated and entered as his Reading Aptitude Percentile Rank (see Table 1). Juan's scores in these areas ranked 33 % in the area of Reading For Fun, 42 % Reading When Required, and a Total Reading Attitude of 37 %. After the study, post-test results increased very slightly by 2% in both Reading For Fun and Reading When Required. Juan's Reading Attitude score increased by 3 %. Juan circled the response "NO! NOT AT ALL" for 14 questions. Some questions included:

- Do you like to have someone at home read a book to you?
- Do you like to read books at home for fun?
- Do you like to read out loud?
- Do you think you can read as well as your friends?
- Do you like to do the reading worksheets at school?

Reflection Forms

According to Juan's responses on the first sample of his reflection form (see table 5) taken during the first two weeks of the study, Juan didn't have a good first week. He had held up the class due to his lack of desire to complete his assigned role on time. Noted during the observation, Juan walked into the room with his head slumped and fell into his assigned seat.

Table 5

Reflection Form Excerpts

Juan

Week 1&2

During the past two weeks of Literature Circle, I felt.....

"I felt like a dumb fool the first week because the first time, I didn't do my role and my group was mad at me. My teacher let me do it in class so it made me hold up everybody. Nobody would talk to me in my group. The next week I started to feel real good because I did my work and the group was happy. My teacher said I was a good Vocabulary Enhancer."

Week 3&4

During the past two weeks of Literature Circle, I felt.....

"I felt better than before because I did my work again. My group was happy. A girl smiled at me because I did my work, and Ben gave me five. I think the teacher liked my drawing because she said she liked the colors. I also helped the smart girl in my group do a boys role because he was absent."

Week 5&6

During the past two weeks of Literature Circle, I felt.....

"a little bad because the group had to wait for me to finish my role. I didn't do my work last night because of things. I don't like it when my group has to wait for me to do my

work. I feel like I'm a pain! The last week I felt good again because I was the artist again. That's my favorite role and I like doing it."

When asked by the group members if he completed his assignment, Juan shrugged his shoulders and never made eye contact. Juan's written responses expressed anger towards himself and feelings of inadequacy.

The second week, Juan's self-concept increased. Juan completed his assignment and was thrilled. Positive reinforcement had also contributed to his heightened self-esteem.

The second sample, taken during the third and fourth week of the study, showed that Juan had two good weeks and stayed on task. He expressed his inner feeling about his assignment that was well done.

Juan expressed an overwhelmed attitude towards his group acceptance. I noted a feeling of inferiority when he referred to "the smart girl in his group."

The final two weeks of the study were similar to the first two. Juan had an unproductive 5th week. Due to the lack of desire to complete his role, expressions of self worth were evident. The last week was successful according to his declaration of devotion to his favorite role as artist.

Overall, Juan's reflection form showed evidence that the reading intervention was more positive than negative.

Maria

The second student chosen to be examined was selected because she is a quiet girl of average talent and abilities among the targeted population. She may not be the most gifted child in the class, but she is easily one of the most dedicated and conscientious student a teacher could hope for. She displays a keen desire to learn and asks many questions, but often misses the point of the lesson. She is very inconsistent in performance, although effort is always

high. It seems as if she sometimes doesn't "click" with the material being presented. Maria completes all seatwork and homework assignments with incredible effort even though she feels reading is hard for her

Pre and Post-Test Results

Table 2, shows an analysis of Maria's pre-test and post-results. Maria's score on the Barksdale Self-Esteem Evaluation showed a SEI score of 56 indicating a serious handicap (see Table 2). Out of twenty-five statements, Maria responded discouragingly to 8 statements. Maria's post-test increased to a score of 74, 18 points higher than her pre-test score and one point away from a disadvantage. Her new score of 76, is still considered a serious handicap. When pre-test and post-test were color-coded to indicate a consistency, five of the eight discouraging statements from her pre-test still remained after completing the post-test. Those statements were as follow:

Statement 1 – I do not have a strong need for people to pay attention to me or like what I do.

Statement 2– I am not hurt by others' opinions or attitudes.

Statement 16–I am open and honest, but not afraid of letting people see my real self.

Statement 19- I enjoy being alone with myself.

Statement 23- I do not need others to agree with me or tell me I'm right.

Table 2
Maria's's Pre-test and Post-test Results

Barkdale Self-esteem Evaluation Data
DeBerry's Reading Attitude Survey

Barkdale Self-Esteem Evaluation
Score 58

1. I don't feel anyone else is better than I am. ☐ 1 ☐ 2 ☐ 3 ☐ 4

2. I am free of shame, blame, and guilt. ☐ 1 ☐ 2 ☐ 3 ☐ 4

3. I am a happy, carefree person. ☐ 1 ☐ 2 ☐ 3 ☐ 4

4. I have no need to prove I am as good as or better than others. ☐ 1 ☐ 2 ☐ 3 ☐ 4

5. I do not have a strong need for people to pay attention to me or like what I do. ☐ 1 ☐ 2 ☐ 3 ☐ 4

6. Looking down and up on me or making me feel "less than" others. ☐ 1 ☐ 2 ☐ 3 ☐ 4

7. I feel warm and loving toward myself. ☐ 1 ☐ 2 ☐ 3 ☐ 4

8. I do not feel others are better than I am because they can do things better, have more money, or are more popular. ☐ 1 ☐ 2 ☐ 3 ☐ 4

9. I am at ease with strangers and make friends easily. ☐ 1 ☐ 2 ☐ 3 ☐ 4

10. I speak up for my own ideas, likes, and dislikes. ☐ 1 ☐ 2 ☐ 3 ☐ 4

11. I am not hurt by others' opinions or attitudes. ☐ 1 ☐ 2 ☐ 3 ☐ 4

12. I do not need praise to feel good about myself. ☐ 1 ☐ 2 ☐ 3 ☐ 4

13. I feel good about others' good luck and winning. ☐ 1 ☐ 2 ☐ 3 ☐ 4

14. I do not feel hurt with my family, friends, or others. ☐ 1 ☐ 2 ☐ 3 ☐ 4

15. I do not feel I must always please others. ☐ 1 ☐ 2 ☐ 3 ☐ 4

16. I am open and honest, and not afraid of letting people see my real self. ☐ 1 ☐ 2 ☐ 3 ☐ 4

17. I am friendly, thoughtful, and generous toward others. ☐ 1 ☐ 2 ☐ 3 ☐ 4

18. I do not blame others for my problems and mistakes. ☐ 1 ☐ 2 ☐ 3 ☐ 4

19. I enjoy being alone with myself. ☐ 1 ☐ 2 ☐ 3 ☐ 4

20. I accept compliments and gifts without feeling uncomfortable or needing to give something in return. ☐ 1 ☐ 2 ☐ 3 ☐ 4

21. I control my reactions and actions without feeling ashamed or "less than." ☐ 1 ☐ 2 ☐ 3 ☐ 4

22. I feel no need to defend what I think, say, or do. ☐ 1 ☐ 2 ☐ 3 ☐ 4

23. I do not need others to agree with me or tell me I'm right. ☐ 1 ☐ 2 ☐ 3 ☐ 4

24. I do not brag about myself, what I have done, or what my family has or does. ☐ 1 ☐ 2 ☐ 3 ☐ 4

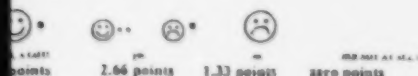
25. I do not feel "put down" when criticized by my friends or others. ☐ 1 ☐ 2 ☐ 3 ☐ 4

Table 2 Pre-test

DeBerry Reading Attitude Survey

Student Maria Administrator _____
Date _____

Scoring Guide:



1. 2 2. 6 3. 2 4. 1 5. 3 6. 1 7. 3 8. 1 9. 3 10. 3
 11. 3 12. 3 13. 3 14. 3 15. 3 16. 3 17. 3 18. 3 19. 3
 20. 3 21. 3 22. 3 23. 3 24. 3 25. 3

Total Points 1-13: 22.66 Total Points 14-25: 22.66

Reading for Fun (Reading when Required)

Total Points 1-25: 45.32

**CALCULATED READING ATTITUDE
PERCENTILE RANK**

(WITH 100% AS COMPLETELY POSITIVE ABOUT READING)

Notes: Circle the total points the student earned in questions 1-13 by 13. Enter the number in the student's reading for fun percentile. Circle the total points the student earned in questions 14-25 by 25. Enter the number in the student's reading when required percentile. Circle the total points the student earned in questions 1-25 by 25. Enter the number in the student's composite reading percentile.

Reading for Fun: 43 % Reading when Required: 44 %

READING ATTITUDE: 44 %

Barkdale Self-Esteem Evaluation
Score 14

1. I don't feel anyone else is better than I am. ☐ 1 ☐ 2 ☐ 3 ☐ 4

2. I am free of shame, blame, and guilt. ☐ 1 ☐ 2 ☐ 3 ☐ 4

3. I am a happy, carefree person. ☐ 1 ☐ 2 ☐ 3 ☐ 4

4. I have no need to prove I am as good as or better than others. ☐ 1 ☐ 2 ☐ 3 ☐ 4

5. I do not have a strong need for people to pay attention to me or like what I do. ☐ 1 ☐ 2 ☐ 3 ☐ 4

6. Looking down and up on me or making me feel "less than" others. ☐ 1 ☐ 2 ☐ 3 ☐ 4

7. I feel warm and loving toward myself. ☐ 1 ☐ 2 ☐ 3 ☐ 4

8. I do not feel others are better than I am because they can do things better, have more money, or are more popular. ☐ 1 ☐ 2 ☐ 3 ☐ 4

9. I am at ease with strangers and make friends easily. ☐ 1 ☐ 2 ☐ 3 ☐ 4

10. I speak up for my own ideas, likes, and dislikes. ☐ 1 ☐ 2 ☐ 3 ☐ 4

11. I am not hurt by others' opinions or attitudes. ☐ 1 ☐ 2 ☐ 3 ☐ 4

12. I do not need praise to feel good about myself. ☐ 1 ☐ 2 ☐ 3 ☐ 4

13. I feel good about others' good luck and winning. ☐ 1 ☐ 2 ☐ 3 ☐ 4

14. I do not feel hurt with my family, friends, or others. ☐ 1 ☐ 2 ☐ 3 ☐ 4

15. I do not feel I must always please others. ☐ 1 ☐ 2 ☐ 3 ☐ 4

16. I am open and honest, and not afraid of letting people see my real self. ☐ 1 ☐ 2 ☐ 3 ☐ 4

17. I am friendly, thoughtful, and generous toward others. ☐ 1 ☐ 2 ☐ 3 ☐ 4

18. I do not blame others for my problems and mistakes. ☐ 1 ☐ 2 ☐ 3 ☐ 4

19. I enjoy being alone with myself. ☐ 1 ☐ 2 ☐ 3 ☐ 4

20. I accept compliments and gifts without feeling uncomfortable or needing to give something in return. ☐ 1 ☐ 2 ☐ 3 ☐ 4

21. I control my reactions and actions without feeling ashamed or "less than." ☐ 1 ☐ 2 ☐ 3 ☐ 4

22. I feel no need to defend what I think, say, or do. ☐ 1 ☐ 2 ☐ 3 ☐ 4

23. I do not need others to agree with me or tell me I'm right. ☐ 1 ☐ 2 ☐ 3 ☐ 4

24. I do not brag about myself, what I have done, or what my family has or does. ☐ 1 ☐ 2 ☐ 3 ☐ 4

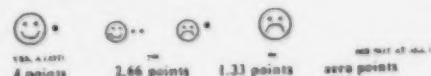
25. I do not feel "put down" when criticized by my friends or others. ☐ 1 ☐ 2 ☐ 3 ☐ 4

Table 2 Post-test

DeBerry Reading Attitude Survey

Student Maria Administrator _____
Grade 4 Date _____

Scoring Guide:



1. 3 2. 6 3. 3 4. 3 5. 3 6. 3 7. 3 8. 3 9. 3 10. 3
 11. 3 12. 3 13. 3 14. 3 15. 3 16. 3 17. 3 18. 3 19. 3
 20. 3 21. 3 22. 3 23. 3 24. 3 25. 3

Total Points 1-13: 25.33 Total Points 14-25: 25.33

Reading for Fun (Reading when Required)

Total Points 1-25: 50.66

**CALCULATED READING ATTITUDE
PERCENTILE RANK**

(WITH 100% AS COMPLETELY POSITIVE ABOUT READING)

Notes: Circle the total points the student earned in questions 1-13 by 13. Enter the number in the student's reading for fun percentile. Circle the total points the student earned in questions 14-25 by 25. Enter the number in the student's reading when required percentile. Circle the total points the student earned in questions 1-25 by 25. Enter the number in the student's composite reading percentile.

Reading for Fun: 49 % Reading when Required: 47 %

READING ATTITUDE: 48 %

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The second test, DeBerry Reading Attitude Survey (see Appendix A), Maria scored 43% in the areas Reading For Fun, 44% Reading When Required, and her Total Reading Attitude score was 44%. Maria circled the response "NO! NOT AT ALL!" on the post-test almost identically matching responses from pre-test (see Table 2). Some negative responses were geared towards the following questions.

- Do you like to read a book when you cannot go outdoors?
- Do you like to have someone at home read a book to you?
- Do you like to read more if a book is interesting to you?
- Do you think you can read as well as your friends can read?
- Do you like to go to a bookstore and look at books?

After the post-test, Maria's score increased by 6% in the area of Reading For Fun, 3% Reading When Required and 4% Total Reading Attitude.

Reflection Form

In the first sample of Maria's reflection form (see Table 6), taken during the first and second week of the study, we saw that Susan began with a statement of displeasure. Maria's group attendance was incomplete. This feeling was temporary in as much as her overall appreciation of the literature and adoration of her group's collaboration in the second week.

The third and fourth week of the study, Maria's written reflections started off well. She experienced feelings of attachment toward group members as well as the enjoyment

Table 6

Reflection Form Excerpts

Maria

Week 1&2

During the past two weeks of Literature Circle, I felt.....

"I felt very bad because a girl in my group was not here for two chapters. Our group did our work all right without her. I like reading fun stories and the work is pretty easy. We get to talk with each other and help each other even the boy who gets on my nerve because he's apart of my group. The teacher make's sure we all are talking about the story."

Week 3&4

During the past two weeks of Literature Circle, I felt.....

"These two weeks were sort of good and bad for me. I felt that I was going to leave out something when I had the role as Summarizer. I ended up writing out the whole chapter. Nobody in my group laughed instead we helped each other and that made me feel good. I understood later that the teacher only wanted a short statement of the main points. I really like circles and some people are really kool." The past week was a lot of fun The story gets real funny. The best part was when he had to where broccoli around his neck all day. I was the artist and I drew a funny picture. Everybody in my group liked it."

Week 5&6

During the past two weeks of Literature Circle, I felt.....

"I felt really good because everyone in the group was here. Marsha, in my group invited me to her birthday party. I never knew she was so kool. One time I didn't like her. We only have a few pages to read until we finish the book I hope we read another story in circles. Our teacher is pretty kool sometimes. She does fun things to make us like to read."

of the literature.

During the final two weeks of the study, Maria's reflection of the intervention proved very enhancing.

Maria's group interaction helped her gain new relationships. In the fifth week, she received an invitation to a group member's party. Her attitude towards the reading intervention was very positive and rewarding!

Susan

The final student chosen was Susan. She is considered superior among the targeted. She exhibits exceptional oral reading skills and is a solid student. She studies a great deal at home and thoroughly prepares for tests. Susan struggles with comprehending text material. She performed inconsistently when asked about chapters read in novels. Although she shows a lack in areas of reading, her work is always meticulously prepared and so she is a pleasure to teach.

Pre and Post-Test Results

Susan scored a SEI of 73 on the Barksdale Self-Esteem Evaluation (see Table 3). This score indicated a serious handicap. Susan responded negatively to three statements. Although she only responded negatively to a few statements, Susan's responses stayed in the middle range indicating she was unsure of how she felt, therefore not accumulating a much greater score (see Table 3). Susan's SEI increased to 79 on the post-test, 6 points higher than her pre-test which is at a disability range. Her negative responses decreased by one statement. The two following statements duplicated themselves on both pre-test and post-test. The statements are as follows:

Statement 23- I do not need others to agree with me or tell me I'm right.

Table 3 Susan's Pre-test and Post-test Results

Barkdale Self-esteem Evaluation Data
DeBerry's Reading Attitude Survey

Barkdale Self-esteem Evaluation
Score 73

1 2 3 4

☐ ☐ ☐ ☐

1. I don't feel anyone else is better than I am.

☐ ☐ ☐ ☐

2. I am free of shame, blame, and guilt.

☐ ☐ ☐ ☐

3. I am a happy, carefree person.

☐ ☐ ☐ ☐

4. I have no need to prove I am as good as or better than others.

☐ ☐ ☐ ☐

5. I do not have a strong need for people to pay attention to me or like what I do.

☐ ☐ ☐ ☐

6. Looking down not upset me or make me feel "less than" others.

☐ ☐ ☐ ☐

7. I feel warm and loving toward myself.

☐ ☐ ☐ ☐

8. I do not feel others are better than I am because they can do things better, have more money, or are more popular.

☐ ☐ ☐ ☐

9. I am at ease with strangers and make friends easily.

☐ ☐ ☐ ☐

10. I speak up for my own ideas, likes, and dislikes.

☐ ☐ ☐ ☐

11. I am not hurt by others' opinions or attitudes.

☐ ☐ ☐ ☐

12. I do not need praise to feel good about myself.

☐ ☐ ☐ ☐

13. I feel good about others' good luck and winning.

☐ ☐ ☐ ☐

14. I do not feel I fail with my family, friends, or others.

☐ ☐ ☐ ☐

15. I do not feel I must always give to others.

☐ ☐ ☐ ☐

16. I am open and honest, and not afraid of letting people see my real self.

☐ ☐ ☐ ☐

17. I am friendly, thoughtful, and generous toward others.

☐ ☐ ☐ ☐

18. I do not blame others for my problems and mistakes.

☐ ☐ ☐ ☐

19. I enjoy being alone with myself.

☐ ☐ ☐ ☐

20. I accept compliments and gifts without feeling uncomfortable or needing to give something in return.

☐ ☐ ☐ ☐

21. I admit my mistakes and defeats without feeling ashamed or "less than."

☐ ☐ ☐ ☐

22. I feel no need to defend what I think, say, or do.

☐ ☐ ☐ ☐

23. I do not need others to agree with me or tell me I'm right.

☐ ☐ ☐ ☐

24. I do not brag about myself, what I have done, or what my family has or does.

☐ ☐ ☐ ☐

25. I do not feel "put down" when criticized by my friends or others.

☐ ☐ ☐ ☐

Barkdale Self-esteem Evaluation
Score 79

1 2 3 4

☐ ☐ ☐ ☐

1. I don't feel anyone else is better than I am.

☐ ☐ ☐ ☐

2. I am free of shame, blame, and guilt.

☐ ☐ ☐ ☐

3. I am a happy, carefree person.

☐ ☐ ☐ ☐

4. I have no need to prove I am as good as or better than others.

☐ ☐ ☐ ☐

5. I do not have a strong need for people to pay attention to me or like what I do.

☐ ☐ ☐ ☐

6. Looking down not upset me or make me feel "less than" others.

☐ ☐ ☐ ☐

7. I feel warm and loving toward myself.

☐ ☐ ☐ ☐

8. I do not feel others are better than I am because they can do things better, have more money, or are more popular.

☐ ☐ ☐ ☐

9. I am at ease with strangers and make friends easily.

☐ ☐ ☐ ☐

10. I speak up for my own ideas, likes, and dislikes.

☐ ☐ ☐ ☐

11. I am not hurt by others' opinions or attitudes.

☐ ☐ ☐ ☐

12. I do not need praise to feel good about myself.

☐ ☐ ☐ ☐

13. I feel good about others' good luck and winning.

☐ ☐ ☐ ☐

14. I do not feel I fail with my family, friends, or others.

☐ ☐ ☐ ☐

15. I do not feel I must always give to others.

☐ ☐ ☐ ☐

16. I am open and honest, and not afraid of letting people see my real self.

☐ ☐ ☐ ☐

17. I am friendly, thoughtful, and generous toward others.

☐ ☐ ☐ ☐

18. I do not blame others for my problems and mistakes.

☐ ☐ ☐ ☐

19. I enjoy being alone with myself.

☐ ☐ ☐ ☐

20. I accept compliments and gifts without feeling uncomfortable or needing to give something in return.

☐ ☐ ☐ ☐

21. I admit my mistakes and defeats without feeling ashamed or "less than."

☐ ☐ ☐ ☐

22. I feel no need to defend what I think, say, or do.

☐ ☐ ☐ ☐

23. I do not need others to agree with me or tell me I'm right.

☐ ☐ ☐ ☐

24. I do not brag about myself, what I have done, or what my family has or does.

☐ ☐ ☐ ☐

25. I do not feel "put down" when criticized by my friends or others.

☐ ☐ ☐ ☐

3 Pre-test

ry Reading Attitude Survey

Student Susan Administrator _____
Grade _____ Date _____

Guide:

2.66 points 1.33 points zero points

1. 2.66 2. 2.66 3. 2.66 4. 2.66 5. 2.66
6. 2.66 7. 2.66 8. 2.66 9. 2.66 10. 2.66
11. 2.66 12. 2.66 13. 2.66

14. 2.66 15. 2.66 16. 2.66 17. 2.66 18. 2.66 19. 2.66
20. 2.66 21. 2.66 22. 2.66 23. 2.66 24. 2.66 25. 2.66

into 1-13: 18.62 Total Points 14-25: 18.62

for Fun) (Reading when Required)

Total Points 1-25: 37.24

**CALCULATED READING ATTITUDE
PERCENTILE RANK**

(WITH 100% AS COMPLETELY POSITIVE ABOUT READING)

Use the table below to find the percentile rank for the student's reading for fun score. Circle the score that is closest to the student's score. Then, circle the percentile rank that is closest to the student's score. (Circle the score that is closest to the student's score.)

For: 36 % Reading when Required: 39 %

READING ATTITUDE: 37 %

Table 3 Post-test

DeBerry Reading Attitude Survey

Student Susan Administrator _____
Grade _____ Date _____

Scoring Guide:

4 points 2.66 points 1.33 points zero points

1. 2.66 2. 2.66 3. 1.33 4. 1.33 5. 2.66
6. 2.66 7. 2.66 8. 1.33 9. 1.33 10. 2.66
11. 2.66 12. 2.66 13. 1.33

14. 1.33 15. 2.66 16. 2.66 17. 2.66 18. 2.66 19. 1.33
20. 2.66 21. 2.66 22. 2.66 23. 2.66 24. 2.66 25. 2.66

Total Points 1-13: 23.74 Total Points 14-25: 21.25

(Reading for Fun) (Reading when Required)

Total Points 1-25: 45.22

**CALCULATED READING ATTITUDE
PERCENTILE RANK**

(WITH 100% AS COMPLETELY POSITIVE ABOUT READING)

Use the table below to find the percentile rank for the student's reading for fun score. Circle the score that is closest to the student's score. Then, circle the percentile rank that is closest to the student's score. (Circle the score that is closest to the student's score.)

Reading for Fun: 46 % Reading when Required: 44 %

READING ATTITUDE: 45 %

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Statement 25- I do not feel "put down" when criticized by my friends or others.

On the DeBerry Reading Attitude Survey, Susan scored 36% when reading for fun, 39% reading when required and 37% for total reading attitude. Susan's post-test increased by 8% for total Reading Attitude Percentile Rankin. Almost consistent with the responses negatively answered on the pre-test, many of Susan's negative responses were as follows:

- Do you like to read a book when you cannot go outdoors?
- Do you like to read during free time at school?
- Do you think you will like to read more when you are older?
- Do you like to read a book and answer questions about what you read?
- Do you like for your teacher to ask questions about what you read?

Susan's post-test increased by 10% Reading For Fun, 5% Reading When Required and 8% for total reading attitude.

Reflection Form

In the first sample of Susan's reflection form (see Table 7) taken during the first two weeks of the study, her reflections were expressed with great amount of self-esteem in reading. She reflected a student of great competency. Susan modeled a challenged student who can handle any new task. Also, noted in the observation was an attitude of superiority, especially when she commented on a poorer reader in her group.

In the third and fourth week of the study, she identified with the story characters and therefore showed feelings of appreciation toward the literature. Her self-concept seemed very high and her attitude toward the poorer reader in her group concealed a newly established acquaintance. Noted in the observation was a self-deception of negativity towards other group

Table 7
Reflection Form Excerpts

Susan

Week 1&2

During the past two weeks of Literature Circle, I felt.....:

I felt happy because I never did this before. I thought we had to read a lot but it turned out that all I had to do was my role and everybody reads the same amount. I was a little mad because I noticed my groups novel was longer than the other groups. After a while it didn't bother me because I read "JT" that easy book, last year. This book doesn't seem hard, but it means our group has to read more chapters. I don't see how this boy in our group is going to keep up. He's not such a good reader. I think she made a mistake with the groups. But the teacher says we have to read and discuss as a group so we'll just help him. The book is interesting and I thought my role as Connector was easy. Everybody did their work. Even Manuel did a good job."

Week 3&4

During the past two weeks of Literature Circle, I felt. "The only thing I don't like is when somebody is absent from our group. Everyone

seems to look at me. I want to read ahead of the group because this is the first time I really think I like a novel. It reminds me of a girl I know that has a brother who is retarded. This experiment our teacher is doing is pretty neat. We get to talk about the story and get to listen to other groups talk about their novels. I think that's a neat way to get everybody working. I would hate to be in a group with some people who hardly do work. I'll be mad if they were in my group. I don't mind helping the boy in my group spell words, cause he tries hard. He's really funny. I thought he was really quiet. He's funny."

Week 5&6

During the past two weeks of Literature Circle, I felt..

"I felt very tired and mad. I was tired of doing Sonia's job. She's been out for a few days and I had every role at least twice. It shouldn't bother me because we could have had harder things to do or even boring novels. I really hate to read, but this book is pretty good and the roles are interesting. I connected this book to a girl I know and her brother." I like reading aloud in a group this way we could share our thoughts "

In the final weeks of the study, Susan became weary of the intervention due to her group's attendance, which caused Susan to take on other responsibilities. She soon realized that obstacles could have been worse. Susan expressed her attitude towards reading that had enhanced through her devotion to the literature as well as group participation

Discussion

After analyzing all the data, the intervention had merit. The supporting data confirmed my hypothesis that modified reading intervention could enhance self-esteem and reading in diverse reading levels. The post-test revealed that targeted students had positive attitudes toward reading and an increase of self-esteem. Juan, the lowest level student increased his reading attitude by 3% and his Self-Esteem Inventory (SEI) increased by 7 points, Maria, the average student increased her reading attitude by 4% and her SEI increased significantly by 18 points. Lastly, Susan, the superior student increased her reading attitude by 8% and her SEI increased by 6 points. For each of the students targeted during my research term, results were as unique as each of the students. The results of my research with each of these students' were entirely a learning experience to them and to me. The proof of progress was in their demeanor and participation in class, their interest in the content, and their increased comfort level with the researcher and members of their group. I truly believed that students benefited from each other. In many cases, there was notation of conversations, or interactions that seemed to be the moment where my research clicked. The finding was consistent with the reviews of literature. The results of this study showed a trend toward an improved attitude toward reading through individual differences and reading approaches. Although the three-targeted students lack great amounts of self-esteem, a low score on the Barksdale Self-Esteem Evaluation had no reflection on anyone. A person's existing level of

self-esteem simply is what IS-the product of faulty cultural conditioning. The intervention proved self-esteem could be raised along with reading attitudes. Targeted students will still encounter many negative feelings towards reading, but we must remember that attitudes are built up over many years and they cannot change dramatically in six weeks.

Limitations

There were several problems that were faced during the study's implementation. These problems can be considered as the limitations to this study and the reasons for non-significant change in targeted students. One reason for non-significant growth was that the causes and persistence of low self-esteem are multiple and complex (DiVesta Thompson, 1970). This study did not investigate the influence of parents, family interrelationships, peers, family and community socio-economics.

Another reason for non-significant self-esteem evaluation is the time limit. Attitudinal change is difficult to modify and may require a longer time to rebuild a positive identity. The very nature of pupils with learning disorders presents a problem. Pupils with learning disorders tend to believe they are inadequate. They tend to resist change and risks.

Future Implications

The implications of this study and the complexity of self-esteem and reading suggests areas for future study. A longer time span will be required for the second study, along with an increased target population. I will focus more on individual needs and assign group buddies that will mentor, call or even e-mail each other to communicate or ask for help before group intervention. I

will tape-record group interactions, then later, I would point out the students' strengths and talk about their unique situation. The second study will be more extensive focusing on the cognitive, affective, and behavioral elements of self-esteem and reading. I will use the same grade level of children.

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Appendixes

Appendix A

DeBerry Reading Attitude Survey

1. Do you like to get a book for a present?

☺ ☺ ☺ ☺

YES, A LOT! yes no NO! NOT AT ALL!

2. Do you like to read a book when you cannot go outdoors?

☺ ☺ ☺ ☺

YES, A LOT! yes no NO! NOT AT ALL!

3. Do you like to have someone at home read a book to you?

☺ ☺ ☺ ☺

YES, A LOT! yes no NO! NOT AT ALL!

4. Do you like to read books at home for fun?

☺ ☺ ☺ ☺

YES, A LOT! yes no NO! NOT AT ALL!

5. Do you like to read more if a book is interesting to you?

☺ ☺ ☺ ☺

YES, A LOT! yes no NO! NOT AT ALL!

6. Do you think you can read as well as your friends can read?

☺ ☺ ☺ ☺

YES, A LOT! yes no NO! NOT AT ALL!

7. Do you think your friends like to read?

☺ ☺ ☺ ☺

YES, A LOT! yes no NO! NOT AT ALL!

8. Do you like to read during free time at school?

☺ ☺ ☺ ☺

YES, A LOT! yes no NO! NOT AT ALL!

9. Do you like to read sometimes instead of playing?

☺ ☺ ☺ ☺

YES, A LOT! yes no NO! NOT AT ALL!

10. Do you think you will like to read more when you are older?

☺ ☺ ☺ ☺

YES, A LOT! yes no NO! NOT AT ALL!

11. Do you like to go to a bookstore and look at books?

☺ ☺ ☺ ☺

YES, A LOT! yes no NO! NOT AT ALL!

12. Do you like to read books that you already know how to read?

☺ ☺ ☺ ☺

YES, A LOT! yes no NO! NOT AT ALL!

13. Do you think you will read more when you do not have to read?

😊 😊- 😊 😊

YES, A LOT! yes no NO! NOT AT ALL !

14. Do you like to read a book and answer questions about what you read?

😊 😊- 😊 😊

YES, A LOT! yes no NO! NOT AT ALL !

15. Do you like to have a book read to you by your teacher?

😊 😊- 😊 😊

YES, A LOT! yes no NO! NOT AT ALL !

16. Do you like to read out loud?

😊 😊- 😊 😊

YES, A LOT! yes no NO! NOT AT ALL !

17. Do you like to read the stories in your school reading book?

😊 😊- 😊 😊

YES, A LOT! yes no NO! NOT AT ALL !

18. Do you like to learn new things from a book?

😊 😊- 😊 😊

YES, A LOT! yes no NO! NOT AT ALL !

19. Do you like to learn words, which you have not seen before, while you are reading?

😊 😊- 😊 😊

YES, A LOT! yes no NO! NOT AT ALL !

20. Do you like to do the reading worksheets at school?

😊 😊- 😊 😊

YES, A LOT! yes no NO! NOT AT ALL !

21. Do you like for your teacher to ask questions about what you are reading?

😊 😊- 😊 😊

YES, A LOT! yes no NO! NOT AT ALL !

22. Do you like to read about anything at school?

😊 😊- 😊 😊

YES, A LOT! yes no NO! NOT AT ALL !

23. Do you like to start reading a new story at school?

😊 😊- 😊 😊

YES, A LOT! yes no NO! NOT AT ALL !

24. Do you like to read books with lots of pictures?

😊 😊- 😊 😊

YES, A LOT! yes no NO! NOT AT ALL !

25. Do you think you would like going to school more, if there was more story reading
and less of the other subjects?

😊 😊- 😊 😊

YES, A LOT! yes no NO! NOT AT ALL !

Appendix B

Barksdale Self-Esteem Evaluation

This Self-Esteem Evaluation measures your current level of self-esteem, your Self-Esteem Index (SEI), and serves as a gauge of your progress in achieving sound self-esteem. It is important to clearly understand all statements and be completely honest in your scoring if you are to obtain a valid SEI. It is essential that you answer these statements according to how you actually feel or behave, instead of how you think you "should" feel or behave.

Score as follows (each score shows how true or the amount of time you believe that statement is true for you):

- 0 = not at all true for me
- 1 = somewhat true or true only part of the time
- 2 = fairly true or true about half the time
- 3 = mainly true or true most of the time
- 4 = true all the time

Scoring = 0 1 2 3 4

Not True

True

Self-Esteem Statements

- | 0 | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | |
|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|---|
| ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | 1. I don't feel anyone else is better than I am. |
| ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | 2. I am free of shame, blame, and guilt. |
| ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | 3. I am a happy, carefree person. |
| ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | 4. I have no need to prove I am as good as or better than others. |
| ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | 5. I do not have a strong need for people to pay attention to me or like what I do. |
| ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | 6. Losing does not upset me or make me feel "less than" others. |
| ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | 7. I feel warm and loving toward myself. |
| ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | 8. I do not feel others are better than I am because they can do things better, have more money, or are more popular. |
| ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | 9. I am at ease with strangers and make friends easily. |
| ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | 10. I speak up for my own ideas, likes, and dislikes. |
| ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | 11. I am not hurt by others' opinions or attitudes. |

- ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ 12. I do not need praise to feel good about myself.
☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ 13. I feel good about others' good luck and winning.
☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ 14. I do not find fault with my family, friends, or others.
☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ 15. I do not feel I must always please others.
☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ 16. I am open and honest, and not afraid of letting people see my real self.
☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ 17. I am friendly, thoughtful, and generous toward others.
☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ 18. I do not blame others for my problems and mistakes.
☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ 19. I enjoy being alone with myself.
☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ 20. I accept compliments and gifts without feeling uncomfortable or needing to give something in return.
☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ 21. I admit my mistakes and defeats without feeling ashamed or "less than."
☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ 22. I feel no need to defend what I think, say, or do.
☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ 23. I do not need others to agree with me or tell me I'm right.
☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ 24. I do not brag about myself, what I have done, or what my family has or does.
☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ 25. I do not feel "put down" when criticized by my friends or others.
0 1 2 3 4

The possible range of your Self-Esteem Index is from 0 to 100. Sound self-esteem is indicated by an SEI of 95 or more. Good self-esteem is indicated by a score of 90 to 94. Experience shows that any score under 90 is a disadvantage, a score of 75 or less is a serious handicap, and an SEI of 50 or less indicates a really crippling lack of self-esteem.

Literature Circle Reflections

Author _____

Please end the following prompt on the lines provided of your past two weeks Literature Circle experience. Please be as open and honest as you possibly can.

This image shows a single sheet of white paper with horizontal blue or grey ruling lines. The lines are evenly spaced and run across the width of the page. There is no handwriting or printed text on the paper.

Appendix D

Participation Release

Consent of Authorized Representative for Subject to Participation

Dear Parents,

I am working on a Masters Degree through Kean University in Union, N.J. My project is focused on middle school children's relationship between self-esteem and reading. Part of my study may involve reading tests, questionnaires along with journal writing. Thank you for your willingness to assist me in this meaningful work.

I _____, parent or guardian of _____, hereby give permission for my child to participate in a study of self-esteem. This form is consent to assess your child in the area of effectiveness of reading. The results of the assessments will be available at your request and used in the study only.

Sincerely,

Ms. Carol Richardson

Parent Signature: _____ Date: _____

Privacy of Records

Your child's name will not be used anywhere in the study. The information will be used for data collection and statistical information only.

Appendice D

Permiso de Participación

Consentimiento de representante autorizado para sujeto a participar.

Estimados Padres,

Estoy estudiando para obtener mi Maestria en Lectura de la Universidad de Kean, Union N.J.

Necesito algunos estudiantes para mis estudios. Parte de mis estudios pueden incluir pruebas de lecturas y cuestionarios acompañados de escrituras en diarios. Me gustaria que su hijo/a participara en este proyecto pero primero necesito su permiso para que su hijo/a participe. Por favor ayudeme dandome su permiso.

Yo, _____, padre o guardian de _____,

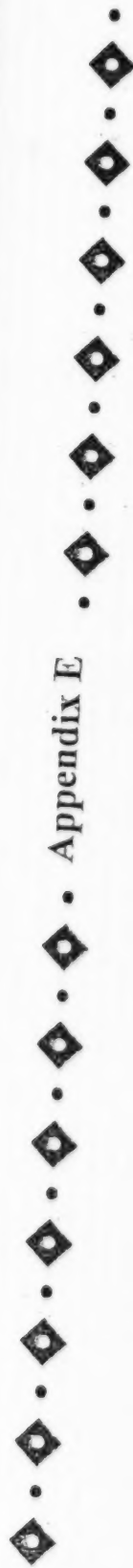
Autorizo que mi hijo(a) participe en un estudio de auto-estima. Los resultados de esta medicion estaran disponible a su peticion y seran usado en el estudio solamente.

Sinceramente,
Ms. Carol Richardson

Firma del padre _____ Fecha: _____

Privacidad de expediente

El nombre de su hijo(a) no sera usado en ninguna parte del estudio. La informacion sera utilizada para la recopilacion de datos e informacion solamente.



January 2003

Literature Circle Monthly Meeting Calendar

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
			1	2	3	4
5	6	7 "JT"	8 "Be a Perfect Person"	9 "Summer of the Swan"	10	11
12	13	14 "JT"	15 "Be a Perfect Person"	16 "Summer of the Swan"	17	18
19	20	21 "JT"	22 "Be a Perfect Person"	23 "Summer of the Swan"	24	25
26	27	28 "JT"	29 "Be a Perfect Person"	30 "Summer of the Swan"	31	

February 2003

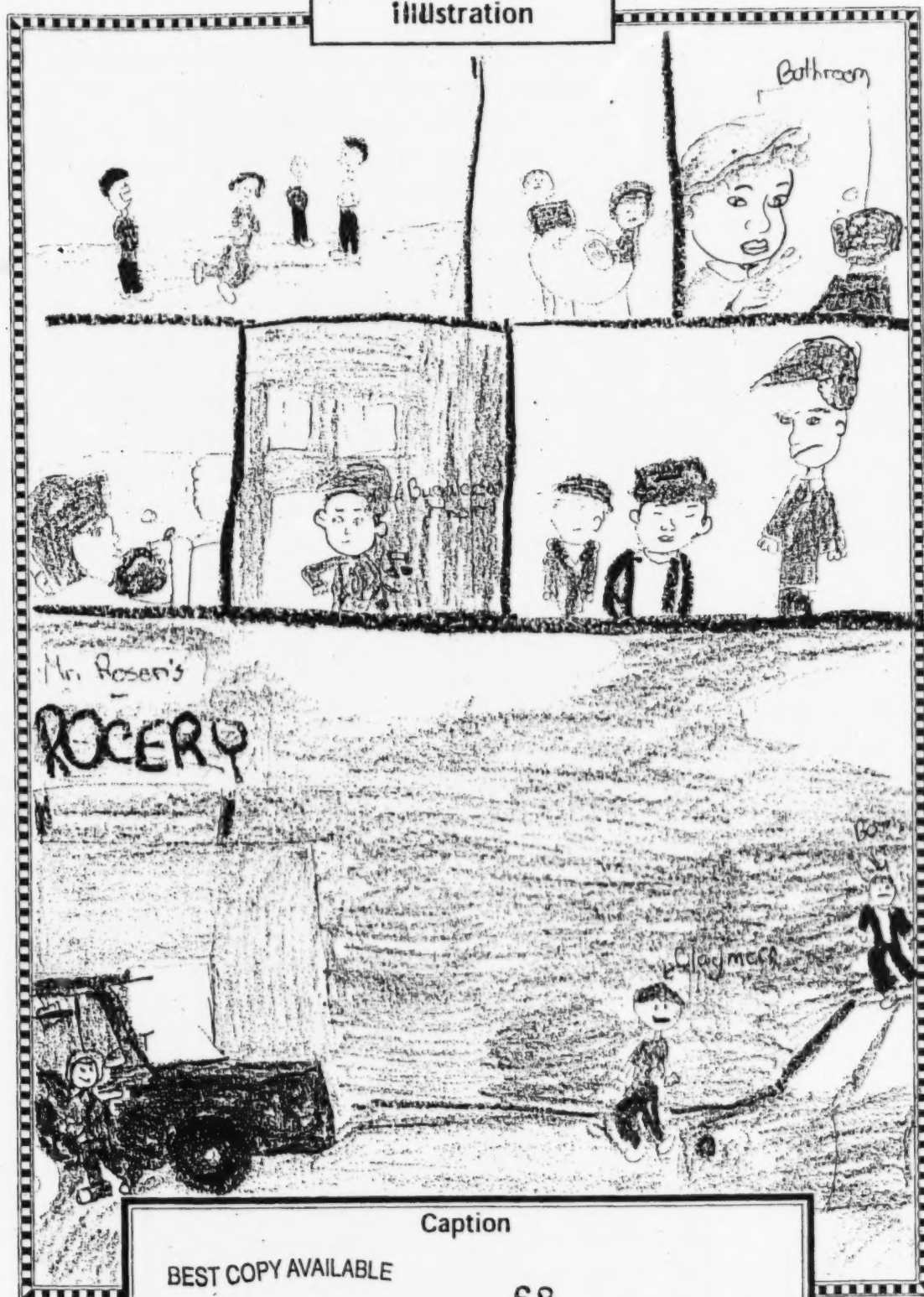
Literature Circle Monthly Meeting Calendar

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
						1
2	3	4 "JT"	5 "Be a Perfect Person"	6 "Summer of the Swans"	7	8
9	10	11 JT"	12 Be a Perfect Person	13 Summer of the Swans	14	15
16	17	18	19	20	21	22
23	24	25	26	27	28	

Appendix F

Role-Sheets

Illustration



Caption

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Vocabulary Enhancer

Wonder Words: Write five words and their definitions from your reading that you wonder about and want to talk about with your group.

Vocabulary Word	Page #	My Best Guess	Dictionary Definition
Benbrant	36	body	standing on a
decorated	36	made it	making it look nice
attention	37	not there	to be
cafeteria	38	place	school
PPC	39	toy	something for

Super Summarizer

For Discussion Date:

Reading Assignment

Write a brief summary of the chapter below and share with group. J.T. went to the store and got tuna fish then mama meley slapped J.T. in his butt and said go on to school you. When J.T. got to school he went to the bath room and Boomer and Claymore were in there to and J.T. got his butt wiped.

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

Cool Connector

For Discussion Date:

Reading Assignment

It is ~~is~~ like when
my friend found a dog and he
made a house for it. Just
like when JT found a dog.

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

Appendix G

Teacher Observation Record

Please observe an entire literature circle session to obtain information about the students' successes and struggles. The purpose of this observation record is to provide the researcher with feedback to help them to continually monitor students' progress.

Week1: _____ Date: _____

Student observed: _____

Reading level: _____

Completed Role Assignment: Yes No

Specifically they worked on:

Group Participation

Role Interpretation:

Attitude: _____

Teacher Comment _____

Teacher Signature _____



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